

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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O R 161533Z JUN 78
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1121
INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY CAIRO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 JERUSALEM 1658

EXDIS -- NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1-2
TAGS: PBOR, PORG, MARR, UNSC, IS, LE
SUBJ: MEETING BETWEEN UNIFIL OFFICERS AND MILITIA IN SOUTHERN
LEBANON, JUNE 15

1. UN SOURCE HAS PROVIDED US IN CONFIDENCE WITH A COPY OF
UNIFIL REPORT ON CONTACTS BETWEEN UNIFIL OFFICERS AND MILITIA
IN SOUTHERN LEBANON WHICH TOOK PLACE ON JUNE 15. FOLLOWING
IS TEXT OF REPORT.

2. BEGIN TEXT: "YESTERDAY, THE SITUATION IN MARJAYOUN AREA
BECAME VERY TENSE RESULTING IN MORTAR ROUNDS BEING FIRED
INTO CLOSE PROXIMITY TO A NORWEGIAN COMPANY COMMAND POST.
ALSO NUMEROUS ARMED CHRISTIAN MILITIA ROADBLOCKS WERE ESTABLISHED
AROUND MARJAYOUN AREA WHICH PREVENTED ALL UNIFIL MOVEMENT FROM
193 GRID LINE TO THE EAST. SIMULTANEOUSLY CHRISTIAN MILITIA
WITH A TANK AND TWO ARMOURED PERSONNEL CARRIERS APPROACHED
A NORWEGIAN CHECKPOINT DEMANDING TO BE ALLOWED TO ENTER INTO
UN BUFFER ZONE. THE NORWEGIAN BATTALION BLOCKED PASSAGE OF
MILITIA WITH A UN ARMOURED PERSONNEL CARRIER AND MILITIA RE-
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LUCTANTLY DEPARTED AREA.

3. "I DISPATCHED TWO STAFF OFFICERS TO AREA TO DETERMINE
CAUSE OF TENSION. THE TWO OFFICERS MET WITH A GROUP OF HEAVILY
ARMED, AGITATED AND TABLE-POUNDING CHRISTIAN MILITIA WHO
REPRESENTED SEVERAL GROUPS SUCH AS KEEPERS OF THE CEDARS,
PHALANGIST KATAEB, AND OTHER LOCAL MILITIA GROUPS.

4. "THESE PERSONNEL WERE VERY EXCITED ABOUT LOCAL SITUATION. APPARENTLY DURING MORNING MAJOR HADDAD HAD INSTRUCTED HIS SOLDIERS TO RETURN TO THEIR BARRACKS AS PER INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED BY MR. EL HOSS. SOME OF HIS SOLDIERS COMPLIED WITH THE MILITIA FORCES. HADDAD WENT TO NORWEGIAN POSITION TO DISCUSS TANK PROBLEM AND WAS IN PROCESS OF MEETING NORWEGIAN SECOND IN COMMAND WHEN MILITIA SOLDIERS PHYSICALLY TOOK HIM AWAY. MAJOR HADDAD WAS VISIBLY SHAKEN AND EMBARRASSED AS WAS OBSERVED BY NORWEGIAN OFFICER AND TWO UNMO'S. ONE REPORT WAS THAT HE WAS ARRESTED.

5. "AT THE MEETING CHRISTIAN MILITIA GROUP (EIGHTEEN) STATED QUOTE THAT MAJOR HADDAD IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PROTECTION AND SECURITY OF POPULATION AND THAT HE COULD NOT ACCOMPLISH THAT WHILE HIS SOLDIERS REMAINED IN BARRACKS. HE IS UNDER HEAVY PRESSURE OF UNIFIL WHO IS SERVANT OF LEBANESE GOVERNMENT AND PLO. MR. EL HOSS IS A SLAVE OF SYRIANS AND PLO. THEY FEEL THAT UNIFIL FORCES WILL TAKE AWAY THEIR RIGHT TO DEFEND THEMSELVES AND THEIR HOMES. HADDAD IS A SOLDIER AND IS AFRAID OF HIS SALARY. THEY WANT NO MORE FOREIGNERS ON THEIR SOIL. MR. EL HOSS AND MR. ASSAD SHOULD RETURN TO THE PEOPLE (THE) LAND THAT BELONGS TO THEM. UNQUOTE.

6. "THE GROUP FURTHER STATED THAT QUOTE THEY SUPPORTED THE TENTATIVE GENTLEMAN'S AGREEMENT BETWEEN MAJOR HADDAD AND CONFIDENTIAL

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GENERAL ERSKINE AND THAT ANY CHANGE IN THAT AGREEMENT WILL FORCE CHRISTIANS TO TAKE DRASTIC ACTIONS. THEY RESPECT HADDAD AND WANT HIM BACK IN HIS NORMAL PROTECTIVE ROLE AND NOT IN BARRACKS. UNQUOTE.

7. " UNIFIL REPRESENTATIVES ASKED WHAT DID THE GROUP WANT FROM UNIFIL AND WHY ROADBLOCKS WERE ESTABLISHED. THEY REPLIED THAT QUOTE UNIFIL MUST KEEP PLO FAR TO THE NORTH AND PUSH THEM OUT OF LEBANON UNQUOTE. THEY ALSO WANT QUOTE TO BE ALLOWED TO PATROL THEIR OWN AREA AND INTO LOCAL UN CONTROLLED ZONE TO RID THE AREA OF PLO UNQUOTE.

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8. REPRESENTATIVES FROM UNIFIL FEEL THAT MILITIA ARE DEEPLY AFRAID THAT UNIFIL HAS A MISSION TO DISARM THEM AND THAT THE GROUP WANTS POSITIVE UNIFIL ACTION TO EJECT PLO FROM AREAS OF KAUKABA AND RACHAIYA EL FOUKHAR. THE GROUP OBVIOUSLY SEEKS RECOGNITION OF SOME SORT AND REASSURANCE OF UNIFIL'S ABILITY TO PROTECT THE POPULATION. THESE MILITIA GROUPS ARE PART OF SOME 33 LOCAL MILITIA GROUPS IN THE SOUTH AND CLAIM TO REPRESENT BETWEEN 4,000 AND 6,000 ARMED MILITIA.

9. "THESE MILITIA CONTROL AND MAN ALMOST ALL ARTILLERY AND MORTARS IN THE HADDAD AREA AND ALSO CONTROL AND MAN OVER HALF THE TANKS AND ARMoured PERSONNEL CARRIERS GENERALLY ASSUMED TO BE IN MAJOR HADDAD'S FORCES. THE MILITIA HAVE NOT BEEN USED IN PAST THREE MONTHS BECAUSE ISRAELI INVASION DID NOT REQUIRE THEIR SERVICES BUT WITH APPROACH OF PLO AND THE ORDERS OF MR. EL HOSS THE SITUATION HAS CHANGED.

10. "THEY DO NOW POSE A SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM AND THREAT TO UNIFIL AND IS ONE MORE OF A GROWING LIST OF GROUPS WITH WHICH WE WILL HAVE TO MAINTAIN CONTACT IN AN ATTEMPT TO LESSEN TENSION
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IN THE AREA. THE GROUP OVVIOUSLY HAS NO OVERALL LEADER BUT STATED THAT ANY FURTHER DISCUSSIONS WOULD BE WITH THE WAR COUNCIL. HADDAD TOLD US AT A MEETING LAST WEEK THAT HE HAD VERY LIMITED CONTROL OVER THE GROUP BUT WOULD, IF ASKED, TRY TO BE COORDINATOR. WE ARE NOT SURE NOW OF HIS EFFECTIVENESS TO DO SO.

11. "AT MIDNIGHT THE GROUP INFORMED UNIFIL THAT THEY WILL PROVIDE PASSAGE OF SOLDIERS/SUPPLY/VEHICLES ON PREVIOUSLY UTILIZED ROUTES EXCEPT A TIME RESTRAINT OF 0730 UNTIL DARKNESS. THEY FURTHER STATED THAT ONE OF THE AREAS COORDINATED WITH HADDAD

FOR UNIFIL OCCUPATION WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE AND THAT ABOVE INFORMATION WAS VALID FOR 48 HOURS. THEY ALSO STATED THAT IF THEY SPOT A GROUP OF PLO CLOSE TO A UNIFIL POSITION AND UNIFIL IS NOT RESPONDING TO SITUATION THAT THE MILITIA WILL FIRE ON BOTH UNIFIL AND PLO POSITION.

12. "WE HAVE A MEETING WITH MAJOR HADDAD THIS AFTERNOON. POSSIBLY ADDITIONAL SITUATION WILL DEVELOP BUT MUCH OF THE PROBLEM AREA REVOLVES AROUND INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO HADDAD BY OFFICIALS IN BEIRUT." END TEXT.

13. COMMENT: THIS UNIFIL REPORT CONFIRMS EARLIER INDICATIONS (BEIRUT 3215) THAT SOME MILITIA GROUPS IN SOUTHERN LEBANON MAY NOT BE UNDER HADDAD'S CONTROL. OUR SOURCE HAS TOLD US THAT ALTHOUGH IT IS POSSIBLE THAT THERE ARE UNDER-THE-TABLE CONTACTS BETWEEN HADDAD AND THESE MILITIA, UNIFIL HEADQUARTERS IS SATISFIED THAT MANY OF THESE MILITIA GROUPS ARE NOT CONTROLLED BY HADDAD. UNIFIL BELIEVES THAT SUCH GROUPS ARE MORE BEHOLDEN TO IDF FOR SUPPLIES, ETC. THAN THEY ARE TO HADDAD. WE UNDERSTAND THAT UNIFIL IS TRYING TO GET BETTER INFORMATION ON THE SIZE, LOCATION, AND NATURE OF THESE VARIOUS MILITIAS. THIS ALSO CONFIRMS REPORTS THAT HADDAD IS SHOWING SIGNS OF RESPONSIVENESS TO BEIRUT'S ORDERS ALTHOUGH HE IS APPARENTLY CONFIDENTIAL

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HAVING SOME TROUBLE GETTING OTHERS TO GO ALONG WITH HIM.
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